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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

14 March 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, NRO Staff

SUBJECT: Essential Elements of Information (EEIs)

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REFERENCE: Your memorandum of 27 February 1968,  
subject as above [ ]

Dec 65  
1. I have discussed your request with a number of the key members of COMIREX and the COMIREX staff and have reviewed COMOR-D-13/54 /a draft for COMOR members which was reviewed, forwarded to USIB and noted by it as USIB-D-41.13/30 (COMOR-D-13/56)7. As you know, we are engaged in the orderly development of the Essential Elements of Information to be satisfied by overhead photography as part of our efforts to coordinate the implementation of the National Tasking Plan. This process, however, involves a great deal of study and work on the part of a large number of substantive analysts throughout the Intelligence Community. Because of the complexity of the task and its importance in our exploitation effort, it is a job that cannot be done hastily. It will probably be a matter of some months, therefore, before this task is completed.

2. In the meantime, however, I believe that the general picture of our EEIs presented in COMOR-D-13/46-7, which was an input to COMOR-D-13/56, is still a reasonably accurate one. I am sure that there might be changes in detail for specific problems but in general the nature and scope of the EEIs remain unchanged. Furthermore, since COMOR-D-13/46-7 presented EEIs that could be fulfilled both by reconnaissance and by other collection methods, it tends to put the EEIs that we have to meet by reconnaissance alone in better perspective than would be the case if we had to consider them by themselves.

3. You expressed an interest in using a comprehensive list of EEIs as a basis for identifying the numbers and types of collection systems required to satisfy them. I agree that the EEIs are an important part of any such study, especially as pertaining to

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types of systems, but I would like to emphasize my view that the formulation of requirements for numbers and types of collection systems is a much more complex process than the mere analysis of a list of EEIs. EEIs are often far from absolute. For example, we have EEIs for electronic emitters but the signal itself is the truly essential item, not the EEI for photography.

4. Development and use of systems require a continuing interface such as that we have been developing between COMIREX and your staff. In view of the foregoing, I believe that you should use COMOR-D-13/46-7 only as a valid indication of the scope and nature of the present EEIs. We plan to provide to the NRO new EEIs for all target categories as they are developed in the course of the implementation of the National Tasking Plan. It must be understood, as indicated above, that neither this nor any other list is of exclusive value in judging reconnaissance needs.

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Chairman, COMIREX

Copy 1 - Director, NRO Staff  
2 - CIA COMIREX Member  
3 - Chairman, EXSUBCOM  
4-7 - COMIREX

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